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THE VISION

OF

JUDGMENT.

BY LORD BYRON,

(UNDER THE TITLE OF QUEVEDO REDIVIVUS.)

SUGGESTED BY

THE COMPOSITION SO ENTITLED

By the Author of "Wat Tyler."

"A Daniel come to judgment! yea, a Daniel!
I thank thee, Jew, for teaching me that word."

London:

WAKELIN, 1, SHOE LANE, FLEET STREET,

AND ALL BOOKSELLERS.

Price Twopence.

Kofoid

Johnston, Printer, Lovell's Court, St. Paul's.

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PREFACE.

It hath been wisely said, that "One fool makes many;" and it hath been poetically observed,

"That fools rush in, where angels fear to tread!"

If Mr. Southey had not rushed in where he had no business, and where he never was before, and never will be again, the following poem would not have been written. Is it not impossible that it may be as good as his own, seeing that it cannot, by any species of stupidity, natural or acquired, be worse. The gross flattery, the dull impudence, the renegado intolerance, and impious cant of the poem by the author of Wat Tyler, are something so stupendous, as to form the sublime of himself—containing the quintessence of his own attributes.

So much for his poem—a word or two on his preface. *(a)* In this preface it has pleased the magnanimous Laureate to draw the picture of a supposed "Satanic School," the which he doth recommend to the notice of the legislature, thereby adding to his other laurels the ambition of those of an informer. If there exists any where, excepting in his imagination, such a school, is he not sufficiently armed against it by his own intense vanity? The truth is, that there are certain writers whom Mr. S. imagines, like Scrub, to have "talked of him; for they laughed consumedly."

I think I know enough of most of the writers to whom he is supposed to allude, to assert, that they, in their individual capacities, have done more good in the charities of life to their fellow creatures in any one year, than Mr. Southey has done harm to himself by his absurdities in his whole life; and this is saying a great deal. But I have a few questions to ask.

1st. Is Mr. Southey the author of Wat Tyler?

2ndly. Was he not refused a remedy at law by the highest judge of his beloved England, because it was a blasphemous and seditious publication? *(b)*

3rdly. Was he not entitled by William Smith, in full parliament, "a rancorous renegado?" *(c)*

4thly. Is he not poet laureate, with his own lines on Martin the regicide, staring him in the face? *(d)*

And, 5thly. Putting the four preceding items together, with what conscience dare HE call the attention of the laws to the publications of others, be they what they may?

I say nothing of the cowardice of such a proceeding; its meanness speaks for itself, but I wish to touch upon the MOTIVE, which is neither more nor less, than that Mr. S. has been laughed at a little in some recent publications, as he was of yore in the "Antijacobin" by his present patrons. Hence all this "skimble scamble stuff" about "Satanic" and so forth. However, it is worthy of him—"QUALIS AB INCEPTO."

If there is anything obnoxious to the political opinions of a portion of the public, in the following poem, they may thank Mr. Southey. He might have written hexameters, as he has written everything else, for aught that the writer cared, had they been upon another subject. But to attempt to canonize a monarch, who, whatever were his household virtues, was neither a successful nor a patriot king,—inasmuch, as several years of his reign passed in war with America and Irelaud, to say nothing of the aggression upon France,—like all other exaggeration, necessarily begets opposition. In whatever manner he may be spoken of in this new "Vision," his PUBLIC career will not be more favourably transmitted by history. Of his private virtues (although a little expensive to the nation) there can be no doubt.

With regard to the supernatural personages treated of, I can only

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say, that I know as much about them, and (as an honest man) have a better right to talk of them than Robert Southey. I have also treated them more tolerantly. The way in which that poor insane creature, the laureate, deals out his judgments in the next world, is like his own judgment in this. If it was not completely ludicrous, it would be something worse. I don't think that there is much more to say at present. QUEVEDO REDIVIVUS.

P. S.—It is possible that some readers may object, in these objectionable times, to the freedom with which saints, angels, and spiritual persons discourse in this "Vision." But for precedents upon such points, I must refer him to Fielding's "Journey from this World to the Next," and to the "Visions" of myself, the said Quevedo, in Spanish, or translated. The reader is also requested to observe, that no doctrinal tenets are insisted upon or discussed; that the person of the Deity is carefully withheld from sight, which is more than can be said for the laureate, who hath thought proper to make him talk, not "like a school divine," but like the unscholarlike Mr. Southey. The whole action passes on the outside of heaven; and Chaucer's Wife of Bath, Pulci's Morgante Maggiore, Swift's Tale of a Tub, and the others' works above referred to, are cases in point of the freedom with which saints, &c., may be permitted to converse in works not intended to be serious. Q. R.

[*** Mr. Southey, being, as he says, a good Christian and vindictive, threatens, I understand, a reply to this our answer. It is to be hoped that his visionary faculties will, in the mean time, have acquired a little more judgment, properly so called: otherwise he will get himself into new dilemmas. These apostate jacobins furnish rich rejoinders. Let him take a specimen. Mr. Southey laudeth grievously "one Mr. Landor," who cultivates much private renown in the shape of Latin verses; and not long ago, the poet laureate dedicated to him, it appeareth, one of his fugitive lyrics, upon the strength of a poem called GEBIR. Who could suppose, that in this same Gebir, the aforesaid Savage Landor (for such is his grim cognomen) putteth into the infernal regions no less a person than the hero of his friend Mr. Southey's heaven, yea, even George the Third! See also how personal Savage becometh when he hath a mind. The following is his portrait of our late gracious sovereign.

Prince Gebir having descended into the infernal regions, the shades of his royal ancestors are, at his request, called up to his view, and he exclaims to his ghostly guide—

> "Aroar, what wretch that nearest us? what wretch
> Is that with eyebrows white and slanting brow?
> Listen! him yonder, who, bound down supine,
> Shrinks yelling from that sword there, engine-hung.
> He too amongst my ancestors! I hate
> The despot, but the dastard I despise.
> Was he our countryman?
> "Alas, O King!
> Iberia bore him, but the breed accurst
> Inclement winds blew blighting from north-east."
> "He was a warrior then, nor fear'd the gods?"
> Gebir, he fear'd the demons, not the gods,
> Though them, indeed, his daily face ador'd;
> And was no warrior, yet the thousand lives
> Squandered, as stones to exercise a sling!
> And the tame cruelty and cold caprice—
> Oh madness of mankind! address'd, adored!"—*Gebir, p.* 28.

I omit noticing some edifying Ithyphallics of Savagius, wishing to keep the proper veil over them, if his grave but somewhat indiscreet worshipper will suffer it; but certainly these teachers of "great moral lessons" are apt to be found in strange company.]

THE

VISION OF JUDGMENT.

St. Peter sat by the celestial gate,
His keys were rusty, and the lock was dull,
So little trouble had been given of late;
Not that the place by any means was full,
But since the Gallic era "eighty-eight,"
The devils have ta'en a longer, stronger pull,
And "a pull altogether," as they say
At sea, which drew most souls another way.

The angels all were singing out of tune,
And hoarse with having little else to do,
Excepting to wind up the sun and moon,
Or curb a runaway young star or two,
Or wild colt of a comet, which too soon
Broke out of bounds o'er the ethereal blue,
Splitting some planet with its playful tail,
As boats are sometimes by a wanton whale.

The guardian seraphs had retired on high,
Finding their charges past all care below;
Terrestrial business fill'd nought in the sky
Save the recording angel's black bureau!
Who found, indeed, the facts to multiply
With such rapidity of vice and woe,
That he had stripp'd off both his wings in quills,
And yet was in arrear of human ills.

His business so augmented of late years,
That he was forced, against his will, no doubt,
(Just like those cherubs, earthly ministers,)
For some resource to turn himself about,
And claim the help of his celestial peers,
To aid him ere he should be quite worn out
By the increased demand for his remarks;
Six angels and twelve saints were named his clerks.

This was a handsome board—at least for heaven;
And yet they had e'en then enough to do,
So many conquerors' cars were daily driven,
So many kingdoms fitted up anew;
Each day too slew its thousands six or seven,
Till at the crowning carnage, Waterloo,
They threw their pens down in divine disgust—
The page was so besmeared with blood and dust.

This by the way; 'tis not mine to record
What angels shrink from: even the very devil
On this occasion his own work abhorr'd,
So surfeited with the infernal revel;
Though he himself had sharpen'd every sword,
It almost quenched his innate thirst of evil.
(Here Satan's sole good work deserves insertion—
'Tis, that he has both generals in reversion.)

Let's skip a few short years of hollow peace,
Which peopled earth no better, hell as wont,
And heaven none—they form'd the tyrant's lease
With nothing but new names subscrib'd upon't;
'Twill one day finish: meantime they increase,
"With seven heads and ten horns," and all in front,
Like Saint John's foretold beast; but ours are born
Less formidable in the head than horn.

In the first year of freedom's second dawn
Died George the Third; although no tyrant, one
Who shielded tyrants, till each sense withdrawn
Left him nor mental nor external sun:
A better farmer ne'er brush'd dew from lawn,
A worse king never left a realm undone!
He died—but left his subjects still behind,
One half as mad—and t'other no less blind.

He died!—his death made no great stir on earth;
His burial made some pomp; there was profusion
Of velvet, gilding, brass, and no great dearth
Of aught but tears—save those shed by collusion;
For these things may be bought at their true worth:
Of elegy there was the due infusion—
Bought also; and the torches, cloaks, and banners,
Heralds, and relics of old Gothic manners,

Form'd a sepulchral melo-drame. Of all
The fools who flock'd to swell or see the show,
Who cared about the corpse? The funeral
Made the attraction, and the black the woe,
There throbb'd not there a thought which pierced the pall
And when the gorgeous coffin was laid low,
It seem'd the mockery of hell to fold
The rottenness of eighty years in gold.

So mix his body with the dust! It might
Return to what it *must* far sooner, were
The natural compound left alone to fight
Its way back into earth, and fire, and air;
But the unnatural balsams merely blight
What nature made him at his birth, as bare
As the mere million's base unmummied clay—
Yet all his spices but prolong decay.

He's dead—and upper earth with him has done
He's buried; save the undertaker's bill,
Or lapidary scrawl, the world is gone
For him, unless he left a German will;
But where's the proctor who will ask his son?
In whom his qualities are reigning still,
Except that household virtue, most uncommon,
Of constancy to a bad, ugly woman.

"God save the king!" It is a large economy
In God to save the like; but if he will
Be saving, all the better; for not one am I
Of those who think damnation better still:
I hardly know too if not quite alone am I
In this small hope of bettering future ill
By circumscribing, with some slight restriction,
The eternity of hell's hot jurisdiction.

I know this is unpopular; I know
'Tis blasphemous; I know one may be damn'd
For hoping no one else may e'er be so;
I know my catechism; I know we are cramm'd

With the best doctrines till we quite o'erflow;
I know that all save England's church have shamm'd,
And that the other twice two hundred churches
And synagogues have made a *damn'd* bad purchase.

God help us all! God help me too! I am
God knows, as helpless as the devil can wish,
And not a whit more difficult to damn
Than is to bring to land a late-hook'd fish,
Or to the butcher to purvey the lamb;
Not that I'm fit for such a noble dish
As one day will be that mortal fry
Of almost every body born to die.

Saint Peter sat by the celestial gate,
And nodded o'er his keys; when lo! there came
A wond'rous noise he had not heard of late—
A rushing sound of wind, and stream, and flame;
In short, a roar of things extremely great,
Which would have made aught save a saint exclaim;
But he, with first a start, and then a wink,
Said, "There's another star gone out, I think!"

But ere he could return to his repose,
A cherub flapp'd his right wing o'er his eyes—
At which St. Peter yawn'd, and rubb'd his nose:
"Saint porter," said the Angel, "prithee rise!"
Waving a goodly wing, which glow'd, as glows
An earthly peacock's tail, with heavenly dyes;
To which the Saint replied, "Well, what's the matter?
Is Lucifer come back with all this clatter?"

"No," quoth the cherub; "George the Third is dead,"
"And who *is* George the Third?" replied the Apostle;
What George? What Third? "The King of England," said
The Angel. "Well! he wont find kings to jostle
Him on his way; but does he wear his head?
Because the last we saw here had a tussle,
And ne'er would have got into heaven's good graces,
Had he not flung his head in all our faces.

He was, if I remember, king of France:
That head of his, which could not keep a crown
On earth, yet ventured in my face to advance
A claim to those of martyrs—like my own:
If I had had my sword, as I had once
When I cut ears off, I had cut him down!
But having but my *keys*, and not my brand,
I only knock'd his head from out his hand.

And then he set up such a headless howl,
That all the saints came out, and took him in;
And there he sits by St. Paul, cheek by jowl;
That fellow Paul—the parvenu? The skin
Of Saint Bartholomew, which makes his cowl
In heaven, and upon earth redeem'd his sin
So as to make a martyr, never sped
Better than did this weak and wooden head.

But had it come up here upon its shoulders,
There would have been a different tale to tell:
The fellow-feeling in the saints beholders
Seems to have acted on them like a spell,
And so this very foolish head heaven solders
Back on its trunk; it may be very well,
And seems the custom here to overthrow
Whatever has been wisely done below.

The Angel answer'd, "Peter! do not pout;
The king who comes has head and all entire,
And never knew much what it was about—
He did as doth the puppet—by its wire,
And will be judged like all the rest, no doubt:
My business and your own is not to enquire
Into such matters, but to mind our cue—
Which is to act as we are bid to do.

While thus they spake, the angelic caravan,
Arriving like a rush of mighty wind,
Cleaving the fields of space, as doth the swan
Some silver stream (say Ganges, Nile, or Inde,
Or Thames, or Tweed) and midst them an old man
With an old soul, and both extremely blind,
Halted before the gate, and in his shroud
Seated their fellow traveller on a cloud.

But bringing up the rear of this bright host
A spirit of a different aspect waved
His wings, like thunder-clouds above some coast
Whose barren beach with frequent wrecks is paved
His brow was like the deep when tempest-tost;
Fierce and unfathomable thoughts engraved
Eternal wrath on his immortal face,
And *where* he gazed a gloom pervaded space.

As he drew near, he gazed upon the gate
Ne'er to be enter'd more by him or sin,
With such a glance of supernatural hate,
As made Saint Peter wish himself within;
He patter'd with his keys at a great rate,
And sweated through his apostolic skin:
Of course his perspiration was but ichor,
Or some such other spiritual liquor.

The very cherubs huddled altogether,
Like birds when soars the falcon; and they felt
A tingling to the tip of every feather,
And form'd a circle like Orion's belt
Around their poor old charge; who scarce knew whither
His guards had led him, though they gently dealt
With royal manes (for by many stories,
And true, we learn the angels all are Tories.)

As things were in this posture, the gate flew
Asunder, and the flashing of its hinges
Flung over space an universal hue
Of many-coloured flame, until its tinges
Reach'd even our speck of earth, and made a new
Aurora borealis spread its fringes
O'er the North Pole; the same seen, when ice-bound,
By Captain Parry's crew, in "Melville's Sound." (*e*)

And from the gate thrown open issued beaming
A beautiful and mighty Thing of Light,
Radiant with glory, like a banner streaming
Victorious from some world o'erthrowing fight,
My poor comparisons must needs be teeming
With earthly likenesses, for here the night
Of clay obscures our best conceptions, saving
Johanna Southcote, (*f*) or Bob Southey raving.

'Twas the archangel Michael; all men know
The make of angels and archangels, since
There's scarce a scribbler has not one to show,
From the fiends' leader to the angels' prince.

There also are some altar-picees, though
I really can't say that they much evince
One's inner notions of immortal spirits;
But let the connoisseurs explain *their* merits.

Michael flew forth in glory and in good;
A goodly work of him from whom all glory
And good arise; the portal past—he stood;
Before him the young cherubs and saints hoary,
(I say *young*, begging to be understood
By looks, not years; and should be very sorry
To state, they were not older than Saint Peter,
But merely that they seem'd a little sweeter.)

The cherubs and the saints bow'd down before
That arch-angelic Hierarch, the first
Of Essences angelical, who wore
The aspect of a god; but this ne'er nurst
Pride in his heavenly bosom, in whose core
No thought, save for his Maker's service, durst
Intrude, however glorified and high;
He knew him but the viceroy of the sky.

He and the sombre silent Spirit met—
They knew each other both for good and ill;
Such was their power, that neither could forget
His former friend and future foe; but still
There was a high, immortal, proud regret
In either's eye, as if 'twere less their will
Than destiny to make the eternal years
Their date of war, and their "Champ Clos" the spheres.

But here they were in neutral space: we know
From Job, that Satan hath the power to pay
A heavenly visit thrice a year or so;
And that "the Sons of God," like those of clay,
Must keep him company; and we might show,
From the same book, in how polite a way
The dialogue is held between the Powers
Of Good and Evil—but 'twould take up hours.

And this is not a theologic tract,
To prove with Hebrew and with Arabic
If Job be allegory or a fact
But a true narrative; and thus I pick
From out the whole but such and such an act
And sets aside the slightest thought of trick.
'Tis every tittle true, beyond suspicion,
And accurate as any other vision.

The spirits were in neutral space, before
The gate of heaven; like eastern thresholds is
The place where death's grand cause is argued o'er,
And souls despatched to that world or to this;
And therefore Michael and the other wore
A civil aspect: though they did not kiss,
Yet still between his Darkness and his Brightness
There passed a mutual glance of great politeness.

The Archangel bowed, not like a modern beau,
But with a graceful Oriental bend,
Pressing one radiant arm just where below
The heart in good men is supposed to tend.
He turned as to an equal, not too low,
But kindly; Satan met his ancient friend
With more hauteur, as might an old Castilian
Poor noble meet a mushroom rich civilian.

He merely bent his diabolic brow
An instant; and then raising it, he stood
In act to assert his right or wrong, and show
Cause why King George by no means could or should
Make out a case to be exempt from woe
Eternal, more than other kings endued
With better sense and hearts, whom history mentions,
Who long have "paved hell with their good intentions."

Michael began: "What wouldst thou with this man,
Now dead, and brought before the Lord? What ill
Hath he wrought since his mortal race began,
That thou can'st claim him? Speak? and do thy will,
If it be just; if in this earthly span
He hath been greatly failing to fulfil
His duties as a king and mortal, say,
And he is thine; if not, let him have way."

"Michael!" replied the Prince of Air, "even here,
Before the gate of him thou servest, must
I claim my subject; and will make appear
That as he was my worshipper in dust,
So shall he be in spirit, although dear
To thee and thine, because nor wine nor lust
Were of his weaknesses; yet on the throne
He reign'd o'er millions to serve me alone.

Look to *our* earth, or rather *mine;* it was,
Once, more thy master's; but I triumph not
In this poor planet's conquest, nor alas!
Need he thou servest envy me my lot:
With all the myriads of bright worlds which pass
In worship round him, he may have forgot
Yon weak creation of such paltry things;
I think few worth damnation save their kings.

And these but as a kind of quit-rent, to
Assert my right as lord; and even had
I such an inclination, 'twere (as you
Well know) superfluous; they are grown so bad,
That hell has nothing better left to do
Then leave them to themselves; so much more mad
And evil by their own internal curse,
Heaven cannot make them better, nor I worse.

Look to the earth, I said, and say again:
When this old, blind, mad, helpless, weak, poor worm,
Began in youth's first bloom and flush to reign,
The world and he both wore a different form,
And much of earth and all the watery plain
Of ocean called him king: through many a storm
His isles had floated on the abyss of Time;
For the rough virtues chose them for their clime.

He came to his sceptre, young: he leaves it, old:
Look to the state in which he found his realm,
And left it; and his annals too behold,
How to a minion first he gave the helm;
How grew upon his heart a thirst for gold,
The beggar's vice, which can but overwhelm
The meanest hearts; and for the rest, but glance
Thine eye along America and France!

'Tis true, he was a tool from first to last;
(I have the workmen safe); but as a tool
So let him be consumed! From out, the past
Of ages, since mankind have known the rule

Of monarchs—from the bloody rolls amass'd
Of sin and slaughter—from the Cæsars' school,
Take the worst pupil; and produce a reign
More drench'd with gore, more cumber'd with the slain.

He ever warr'd with freedom and the free:
Nations as men, home subjects, foreign foes,
So that they utter'd the word 'Liberty!'
Found George the Third their first opponent. Whose
History was ever stain'd as his will be
With national and individual woes?
I grant his household abstinence; I grant
His neutral virtues, which most monarchs want;

I know he was a constant consort; own
He was a decent sire, and middling lord.
All this is much, and most upon a throne;
As temperance, if at Apicius' board,
Is more than at an anchorite's supper shown.
I grant him all the kindest can accord;
And this was well for him, but not for those
Millions who found him what oppression chose.

The new world shook him off: the old yet groans
Beneath what he and his prepared, if not
Completed; he leaves heirs on many thrones
To all his vices, without what begot
Compassion for him—his tame virtues; drones
Who sleep, or despots who have now forgot
A lesson which shall be retaught them, wake
Upon the thrones of Earth; but let them quake!

Five millions of the primitive, who hold
The faith which make ye great on earth, implored
A *part* of that vast *all* they held of old,—
Freedom to worship—not alone your Lord.
Michael, but you, and you, Saint Peter; Cold
Must be your souls, if you have not abhorr'd
The foe to Catholic participation
In all the license of a Christian nation.

True! he allowed them to pray God; but as
A consequence of prayer, refused the law
Which would have placed them upon the same base
With those who did not hold the saints in awe."—
But here Saint Peter started from his place,
And cried, "You may the prisoner withdraw:
Ere Heaven shall ope her portals to this Guelph,
While I am guard, may I be damn'd myself.

Sooner will I with Cerberus exchange
My office (and *his* is no sinecure)
Than see this royal Bedlam bigot range
The azure fields of heaven, of that be sure!"
"Saint!" replied Satan, "you do well to avenge
The wrongs he made your satellites endure;
And if to this exchange you should be given,
I'll try to coax *our* Cerberus up to heaven."

Here Michael interposed: "Good saint! and devil!
Pray not so fast; you both outrun discretion.
Saint Peter! you were wont to be more civil;
Satan! excuse this warmth of his expression,
And condescension to the vulgar's level:
Even saints sometimes forget themselves in session.
Have you got more to say?"—"No."—"If you please,
I'll trouble you to call your witnesses."

Then Satan turned, and waved his swarthy hand,
Which stirred with its electric qualities
Clouds farther off than we can understand.
Although we find him sometimes in our skies;
Infernal thunder shook both sea and land
In all the planets, and hell's batteries
Let off the artillery, which Milton mentions
As one of Satan's most sublime inventions.

This was a signal unto such damned souls
As have the privilege of their damnation
Extended far beyond the mere controls
Of worlds past, present, or to come; no station
Is theirs particularly in the rolls
Of hell assigned; but where their inclination
Or business carries them in search of game,
They may range freely, being damned the same.

They are proud of this—as very well they may,
It being a sort of knighthood, or gilt key
Stuck in their loins; or like to an "entré"
Up the back stairs, or such freemasonry:
I borrow my comparisons from clay,
Being clay myself Let not those spirits be
Offended with such base low likenesses;
We know their posts are nobler far than these.

When the great signal ran from heaven to hell—
About ten million times the distance reckon'd
From our sun to its earth, as we can tell
How much time it takes up, even to a second,
For every ray that travels to dispel
The fogs of London, through which, dimly beacon'd,
The weathercocks are gilt, some thrice a year,
If that the *summer* is not too severe?

I say that I can tell—'twas half a minute!
I know the solar beams take up more time
Ere, pack'd up for their journey, they begin it;
But then their telegraph is less sublime,
And if they ran a race, they would not win it
'Gainst Satan's couriers bound for their own clime.
The sun takes up some years for every ray
To reach its goal—the devil not half a day.

Upon the verge of space, about the size
Of half-a-crown, a little speck appeared,
(I've seen a something like it in the skies.
In the Ægean, ere a squall;) it near'd,
And, growing bigger, took another guise:
Like an aërial ship it tack'd, and steer'd
Or *was* steer'd (I am doubtful of the grammar
Of the last phrase, which makes the stanza stammer;—

But take your choice;) and then it grew a cloud,
And so it was—a cloud of witnesses.
But such a cloud! No land e'er saw a crowd
Of locusts numerous as the heavens saw these;
They shadow'd with their myriads space; their loud
And varied cries were like those of wild geese,
(If nations may be likened to a goose),
And realized the phrase of "hell broke loose."

Here crash'd a sturdy oath of stout John Bull,
Who damn'd away his eyes as heretofore:
There Paddy brogu'd 'by Jasus!' 'What's your will?'
The temperate Scot exclaim'd; the French ghost swore

In certain terms I shan't translate in full,
As the first coachman will: and midst the war,
The voice of Jonathan was heard to express,
"*Our* President is going to war, I guess."

Besides there were the Spaniard, Dutch, and Dane;
In short, an universal shoal of shades
From Otaheite's Isle to Salisbury Plain,
Of all climes and professions, years and trades,
Ready to swear against the good king's reign,
Bitter as clubs in cards are against spades:
All summon'd by this grand "subpœna," to
Try if kings may'nt be damn'd, like me or you.

When Michael saw this host, he first grew pale,
As angels can; next, like Italian twilight,
He turned all colours—as a peacock's tail,
Or sunset streaming through a Gothic skylight
In some old abbey, or a trout not stale,
Or distant lightning on the horizon by night,
Or a fresh rainbow, or a grand review
Of thirty regiments in red, green, and blue.

Then he addressed himself to Satan: "Why—
My good old friend, for such I deem you, though
Our different parties make us fight so shy,
I ne'er mistake you for a *personal* foe;
Our difference is *political*, and I
Trust that, whatever may occur below,
You know my great respect for you; and this
Makes me regret whate'er you do amiss—

Why, my dear Lucifer, would you abuse
My call for witnesses? I did not mean
That you should half of earth and hell produce;
'Tis even superfluous, since two honest, clean,
True testimonies, are enough: we lose
Our time, nay, our eternity, between
The accusation and defence; if we
Hear both, 'twill stretch our immortality."

Satan replied, "To me the matter is
Indifferent, in a personal point of view;
I can have fifty better souls than this
With far less trouble than we have gone through
Already; and I merely argued his
Late Majesty of Britain's case with you
Upon a point of form; you may dispose
Of him: I've kings enough below, God knows!"

Thus spoke the Demon *(g)* (late called 'multifaced,'
By multo-scribbling Southey.) "Then we'll call
One or two persons of the myriads placed
Around our congress, and dispense with all
The rest," quoth Michael; "Who may be so graced
As to speak first? there's choice enough—who shall
It be?" Then Satan answered, "There are many;
But you may choose Jack Wilkes *(h)* as well as any."

A merry, cock-eyed, curious-looking sprite,
Upon the instant started from the throng,
Drest in a fashion now forgotten quite;
For all the fashions of the flesh stick long
By people in the next world; where unite
All the costumes since Adam's, right or wrong,
From Eve's fig-leaf down to the petticoat,
Almost as scanty, of days less remote.

The spirit looked around upon the crowds
Assembled, and exclaimed, "My friends of all
The spheres, we shall catch cold amongst these clouds;
So let's to business; why this general call?
If those are freeholders I see in shrouds,
And 'tis for an election that they bawl,
Behold a candidate with unturn'd coat!
Saint Peter, may I count upon your vote?"

"Sir," replied Michael, "you mistake; these things
Are of a former life, and what we do
Above is more august; to judge of kings
Is the tribunal met; so now you know."
"Then I presume those gentlemen with wings,"
Said Wilkes, "are cherubs; and that soul below
Looks much like George the Third; but to my mind
A good deal older—Bless me! is he blind?"

"He is what you behold him, and his doom
Depends upon his deeds," the angel said.
"If you have aught to arraign in him, the tomb
Gives license to the humblest beggar's head
To lift itself against the loftiest." "Some,"
Said Wilkes, "don't wait to see them laid in lead,
For such a liberty—and I, for one,
Have told them what I thought beneath the sun."

"*Above* the sun repeat, then, what thou hast
To urge against him," said the Archangel. "Why,"
Replied the spirit, "since old scores are past,
Must I turn evidence? In faith, not I,
Besides, I beat him hollow at the last.
With all his lords and commons: in the sky
I don't like ripping up old stories, since
His conduct was but natural in a prince.

Foolish, no doubt, and wicked, to oppress
A poor unlucky devil without a shilling
But then I blame the man himself much less
Than Bute and Grafton, and shall be unwilling
To see him punish'd here for their excess,
Since they were both damn'd long ago, and still in
Their place below; for me I have forgiven,
And vote his 'habeas corpus' into heaven."

"Wilkes," said the devil, "I understand all this;
You turned to half a courtier ere you died,
And seem to think it would not be amiss
To grow a whole one on the other side
Of Charon's ferry; you forget that *his*
Reign is concluded; whatsoe'er betide,
He won't be sovereign more; you've lost your labour,
For at the best he will but be your neighbour.

However, I knew what to think of it,
When I beheld you in your jesting way
Flitting and whispering round about the spit
Where Belial, upon duty for the day,
With Fox's lard was basting William Pitt,
His pupil; I knew what to think, I say:
That fellow even in hell breeds farther ills;
I'll have him *gagg'd*—'twas one of his own bills.

Call Junius!" From the crowd a shadow stalk'd,
And at the name there was a general squeeze,
So that the very ghosts no longer walk'd
In comfort at their own aerial ease,

But were all ramm'd, and jamm'd (but to be balk'd,
As we shall see) and jostled hands and knees,
Like wind compressed and pent within a bladder,
Or like a human cholic, which is sadder.

The shadow came! a tall, thin, gray-haired figure,
That looked as it had been a shade on earth;
Quick in its motions, with an air of vigour,
But nought to mark its breeding or its birth;
Now it wax'd little, then again grew bigger,
With now an air of gloom or savage mirth;
But as you gazed upon its features, they
Changed every instant—to *what*, none could say.

The more intently the ghosts gazed, the less
Could they distinguish whose the features were;
The Devil himself seemed puzzled even to guess;
They varied like a dream—now here, now there;
And several people swore from out the press,
They knew him perfectly; and one could swear
He was his father; upon which another
Was sure he was his mother's cousin's brother;

Another, that he was a duke, or knight,
An orator, a lawyer, or a priest,
A nabob, a man-midwife; but the wight
Mysterious changed his countenance at least
As oft as they their minds; though in full sight
He stood, the puzzle only was increased;
The man was a phantasmagoria in
Himself—he was so volatile and thin!

The moment that you had pronouced him *one*,
Presto! his face changed, and he was another;
And when that change was hardly well put on,
It varied, till I don't think his own mother
(If that he had a mother) would her son
Have known, he shifted so from one to t'other,
Till guessing from a pleasure grew a task,
At this epistolary "iron mask."

For sometimes he like Cerberus would seem—
"Three gentlemen at once," (as sagely says
Good Mrs. Malaprop;) then you might deem
That he was not even *one;* now many rays
Were flashing round him; and now a thick steam
Hid him from sight—like fogs on London days:
Now Burke, now Tooke, he grew to people's fancies,
And certes often like Sir Philip Francis.

I've an hypothesis—'tis quite my own;
I never let it out till now, for fear
Of doing people harm about the throne,
And injuring some minister or peer
On whom the stigma might perhaps be blown;
It is—my gentle public lend thine ear!
'Tis, that what Junius we are wont to call,
Was *really*, *truly*, nobody at all.

I don't see wherefore letters should not be
Written without hands, since we daily view
Them written without heads; and books we see
Are filled as well without the latter too;
And really till we fix on somebody
For certain sure to claim them as his due,
Their author, like the Niger's mouth, will bother
The world to say if *there* be mouth or author.

"And who and what art thou?" the Archangel said.
"For *that* you may consult my title-page,"
Replied this mighty shadow of a shade;
"If I have kept my secret half an age,
I scarce shall tell it now." "Canst thou upbraid,"
Continued Michael, "George Rex, or allege
Aught further?" Junius answer'd, "You had better
First ask him for *his* answer to my letter:

My charges upon record will outlast
The brass of both his epitaph and tomb."
"Repent'st thou not," said Michael, "of some past
Exaggeration? something which may doom
Thyself, if false, as him if true? Thou wast
Too bitter—it is not so? in thy gloom
Of passion?" "Passion!" cried the Phantom dim,
"I loved my country, and I hated him.

What I have written, I have written; let
The rest be on his head or mine!" So spoke
Old "Nominis Umbra;" and while speaking yet,
Away he melted in celestial smoke.
Then Satan said to Michael, "Don't forget
To call George Washington, and John Horne Tooke,
And Franklin;" but at this time there was heard
A cry for room, though not a phantom stirr'd.

At length with jostling, elbowing, and the aid
Of cherubim appointed to that post,
The devil Asmodeus to the circle made
His way, and looked as if his journey cost
Some trouble. When his burden down he laid,
"What's this? (cried Michael,) why 'tis not a ghost?"
"I know it," quoth the incubus, "but he
Shall be one, if you leave the affair to me.

Confound the Renagado? I have sprained
My left wing, he's so heavy; one would think
Some of his works about his neck were chained.
But to the point; while hovering o'er the brink
Of Skiddaw (where as usual it still rained),
I saw a taper, far below me, wink,
And stooping, caught this fellow at a libel—
No less on history than the Holy Bible.

The former is the devil's scripture, and
The latter yours, good Michael; so the affair
Belongs to all of us you understand,
I snatch'd him up just as you see him there,
And brought him off for sentence out of hand;
I've scarcely been ten minutes in the air—
At least a quarter it can hardly be;
I dare say that his wife is still at tea."

Here Satan said, "I know this man of old,
And have expected him for some time here;
A sillier fellow you will scarce behold,
Or more conceited in his petty sphere;
But surely it was not worth while to fold
Such trash below your wing, Asmodeus dear!
We had the poor wretch safe (without being bored
With carriage) coming of his own accord.

But since he's here, let's see what he has done."
"Done!" cried Asmodeus, "he anticipates
The very business you are now upon,
And scribbles as if head-clerk to the Fates.

Who knows to what his ribaldry may run,
When such an ass as this, like Balaam's, prates,
"Let's hear," quoth Michael, "what he has to say;
You know we're bound to that in every way."

Now the Bard, glad to get an audience, which
By no means often was his case below,
Began to cough, and hawk, and hem, and pitch
His voice into that awful note of woe
To all unhappy hearers within reach
Of poets when the tide of rhyme's in flow;
But stuck fast with his first hexameter,
Not one of all whose gouty feet would stir.

But ere the spavin'd dactyls could be spurr'd
Into recitative, in great dismay
Both cherubim and seraphim were heard
To murmur loudly through their long array;
And Michael rose ere he could get a word
Of all his foundered verses under way,
And cried, "For God's sake, stop, my friend, 'twere best,
Non Di, non homines—you know the rest."

A general bustle spread throughout the throng,
Which seemed to hold all verse in detestation;
The angels had of course enough of song
When upon service; and the generation
Of ghosts had heard too much in life, not long
Before, to profit by a new occasion;
The Monarch, mute till then, exclaim'd "What, What!
Pye come again? No more—no more of that!"

The tumult grew, an universal cough
Convulsed the skies, as during a debate,
When Castlereagh has been up long enough,
(Before he was first minister of state,
I mean—*the slaves hear now:*) some cried "off, off,"
As at a farce; till grown quite desperate,
The bard Saint Peter prayed to interpose
(Himself an author) only for his prose.

The varlet was not an ill-favoured knave;
A good deal like a vulture in the face,
With a hook nose and a hawk's eye, which gave
A smart and sharper looking sort of grace
To his whole aspect, which, though rather grave,
Was by no means so ugly as his case;
But that indeed was hopeless as can be,
Quite a poetic felony "*de se*."

Then Michael blew his trump, and stilled the noise
With one still greater, as is yet the mode
On earth besides; except some grumbling voice,
Which now and then will make a slight inroad
Upon decorous silence, few will twice
Lift up their lungs when fairly overcrowed;
And now the bard could plead his own bad cause,
With all the attitudes of self-applause.

He said—(I only give the heads)—he said,
He meant no harm in scribbling; 'twas his way
Upon all topics; 'twas, besides, his bread,
Of which he butter'd both sides; 'twould delay
Too long the assembly (he was pleased to dread)
And take up rather more time than a day,
To name his works—he would but cite a few—
Wat Tyler—Rhymes on Blenheim—Waterloo.

He had written praises of a regicide;
He had written praises of all kings whatever;
He had written for republics far and wide,
And then against them bitterer than ever;
For pantisocracy he once had cried
Aloud, a scheme less moral than 'twas clever;
Then grew a hearty anti-jacobin—
Had turn'd his coat, and would have turn'd his skin.

He had sung against all battles, and again
In their high praise and glory; he had call'd
Reviewing "the ungentle craft," and then
Become as base a critic as ere crawl'd—
Fed, paid, and pamper'd by the very men
By whom his muse and morals had been maul'd;
He had written much blank verse, and blanker prose,
And more of both than any body knows.

He had written Wesley's life:—here turning round
To Satan, "Sir, I'm ready to write yours,
In two octavo volumes, nicely bound,
With notes and preface, all that most allures
The pious purchaser; and there's no ground
For fear, for I can choose my own reviewers:
So let me have the proper documents,
That I may add you to my other saints."

Satan bow'd, and was silent. "Well, if you,
With amiable modesty, decline
My offer, what says Michael? There are few
Whose memoirs could be render'd more divine.
Mine is a pen of all work; not so new
As it was once, but I would make you shine
Like your own trumpet; by the way, my own
Has more of brass in it, and is as well blown.

But talking about trumpets, here's my Vision!
Now you shall judge all people; yes, you shall
Judge with my judgment! and by my decision
Be guided who shall enter heaven or fall!
I settle all these things by intuition,
Times present, past, to come, heaven, hell, and all,
Like King Alfonso. (*i*) When I thus see double,
I save the Deity some worlds of trouble."

He ceased, and drew forth an MS.: and no
Persuasion on the part of devils, or saints,
Or angels, now could stop the torrent; so
He read the first three lines of the contents;
But at the fourth, the whole spiritual show
Had vanish'd, with variety of scents,
Ambrosial and sulphureous, as they sprang,
Like lightning, off from his "melodious twang." (*k*)

Those grand heroics acted as a spell:
The angels stopp'd their ears and plied their pinions;
The devils ran howling, deafen'd, down to hell;
The ghosts fled, gibbering, for their own dominions—
(For 'tis not yet decided where they dwell,
And I leave every man to his opinions;)
Michael took refuge in his trump—but lo!
His teeth were set on edge, he could not blow!

Saint Peter, who has hitherto been known
For an impetuous saint, upraised his keys,
And at the fifth line knock'd the Poet down;
Who fell like Phaeton, but more at ease,

Into his lake, for there he did not drown,
A different web being by the Destinies
Woven for the Laureate's final wreath, whene'er
Reform shall happen either here or there.

He first sunk to the bottom—like his works,
But soon rose to the surface—like himself;
For all corrupted things are buoy'd, like corks, (*l*)
By their own rottenness, light as an elf,
Or wisp that flits o'er a morass: he lurks,
It may be, still, like dull books on a shelf,
In his own den, to scrawl some "Life" or "Vision," (*m*)
As Welborn says—"the devil turn'd precisian."

As for the rest, to come to the conclusion
Of this true dream, the telescope is gone
Which kept my optics free from all delusion,
And show'd me what I in my turn have shown:
All I saw farther in the last confusion,
Was, that King George slipp'd into heaven for one;
And when the tumult dwindled to a calm,
I left him practising the hundredth psalm.

NOTES.

(a) "Mr. Southey, in his pious preface to a poem whose blasphemy is as harmless as the sedition of Wat Tyler, because it is equally absurd with that sincere production, calls upon the 'legislature to look to it,' as the toleration of such writings led to the French Revolution: *not* such writings as Wat Tyler, but as those of the 'Satanic School.' This is not true, and Mr. Southey knows it to be not true. Every French writer of any freedom was persecuted; Voltaire and Rousseau were exiles, Marmontel and Diderot were sent to the Bastile, and a perpetual war was waged with the whole class by the existing despotism. In the next place, the French Revolution was *not* occasioned by any writings whatsoever, but must have occurred had no such writers ever existed. It is the fashion to attribute every thing to the French Revolution, and the French Revolution to every thing but its real cause. That cause is obvious —the government exacted too much, and the people could neither *give* nor *bear more*. Without this, the Encyclopedists might have written their fingers off without the occurrence of a single alteration. And the *English* revolution—(the first, I mean)—what was it occasioned by? The *Puritans* were surely as pious and moral as Wesley or his biographer? Acts—acts on the part of government, and *not* writings against them, have caused the past convulsions, and are tending to the future.

"I look upon such as inevitable, though no revolutionist: I wish to see the English constitution restored, and not destroyed. Born an aristocrat, and naturally one by temper, with the greater part of my present property in the funds, what have *I* to gain by a revolution? Perhaps I have more to lose in every way than Mr. Southey, with all his places and presents for panegyrics and abuse into the bargain. But that a revolution is inevitable, I repeat. The government may exult over the repression of petty tumults; these are but the receding waves repulsed and broken for a moment on the shore, while the great tide is still rolling on and gaining ground with every breaker. Mr. Southey accuses us of attacking the religion of the country; and is he abetting it by writing lives of *Wesley?* One mode of worship is merely destroyed by another. There never was, nor ever will be a country without a religion. We shall be told of *France* again: but

it was only Paris and a frantic party, which for a moment upheld their dogmatic nonsense of theo-philanthropy. The church of England, if overthrown, will be swept away by the sectarians and not by the sceptics. People are too wise, too well informed, too certain of their own immense importance in the realms of space, ever to submit to the impiety of doubt. There may be a few such diffident speculators, like water in the pale sunbeam of human reason, but they are very few; and their opinions, without enthusiasm or appeal to the passions, can never gain proselytes—unless, indeed, they are persecuted—*that*, to be sure, will increase any thing.

"Mr. Southey, with a cowardly ferocity, exults over the anticipated 'death-bed repentance' of the objects of his dislike; and indulges himself in a pleasant 'Vision of Judgment,' in prose as well as verse, full of impious impudence. What Mr. Southey's sensations or ours may be in the awful moment of leaving this state of existence, neither he nor we can pretend to decide. In common, I presume, with most men of any reflection, *I* have not waited for a 'death-bed' to repent of many of my actions, notwithstanding the 'diabolical pride' which this pitiful renegado in his rancour would impute to those who scorn *him*. Whether upon the whole the good or evil of my deeds may preponderate is not for me to ascertain; but as my means and opportunities have been greater, I shall limit my present defence to an assertion, (easily proved, if necessary,) that I, 'in my degree,' have done more real good in any one given year, since I was twenty, than Mr. Southey in the whole course of his shifting and turncoat existence. There are several actions to which I can look back with an honest pride, not to be damped by the calumnies of a hireling. There are others to which I recur with sorrow and repentance; but the only *act* of *my* life of which Mr. Southey can have any real knowledge, as it was one which brought me in contact with a near connection of his own, did no dishonour to that connection nor to me.

"I am not ignorant of Mr. Southey's calumnies on a different occasion, knowing them to be such, which he scattered abroad on his return from Switzerland against me and others: they have done him no good in this world; and if his creed be the right one, they will do him less in the next. What *his* 'death-bed' may be, it is not my province to predicate: let him settle it with his Maker, as I must do with mine. There is something at once ludicrous and blasphemous in this arrogant scribbler of all work sitting down to deal damnation and destruction upon his fellow-creatures, with Wat Tyler, the Apotheosis of George the Third, and the Elegy on Martin the regicide, all shuffled together in his writing-desk. One of his consolations appears to be a Latin note from a work of a Mr. Landor, the author of 'Gebir,' whose friendship for Robert Southey, will, it seems, 'be an honour to him when the ephemeral disputes and ephemeral reputations of the day are forgotten.' I for one never envy him 'the friendship,' nor the glory in reversion which is to accrue from it, like Mr. Thelusson's fortune in the third and fourth generation. This friendship will probably be as memorable as his own epics, which (as I quoted to him ten or twelve years ago in 'English Bards') Porson said 'would be remembered when Homer and Virgil are forgotten,—and not till then.' For the present, I leave him."

(b) In 1821, when Mr. Southey appled to the Court of Chancery for an injunction to restrain the publication of "Wat Tyler," Lord Chancellor Eldon pronounced the following judgment:—"I have looked into all the affidavits, and have read the book itself. The bill goes the length of stating, that the work was composed by Mr. Southey in the year 1794; that it is his own production, and that it has been published by the defendants without his sanction or authority; and therefore seeking an account of the profits which have arisen from, and an injunction to restrain, the publication. I have examined the cases that I have been able to meet with containing precedents

tor injunctions of this nature, and I find that they all proceed upon ahe ground of a title to the property in the plaintiff. On this head distinction has been taken, to which a considerable weight of authority attaches, supported, as it is, by the opinion of Lord Chief Justice Eyre; who has expressly laid it down, that a person cannot recover in damages for a work which is, in its nature, calculated to do injury to the public. Upon the same principle this court refused an injunction in the case of Walcot" (Peter Pindar) "*v.* Walker, inasmuch as he could not have recovered damages in an action. After the fullest consideration, I remain of the same opinion as that which I entertained in deciding the case referred to. Taking all the circumstances into my consideration, it appears to me, that I cannot grant this injunction, until after Mr. Southey shall have established his right to the property by action."—Injunction refused.

(c) Mr. William Smith, M.P. for Norwich, made a virulent attack on Mr. Southey in the House of Commons on the 14th of March, 1817, and in the *Courier*. The Speech is here given.

"The honourable member adverted to that tergiversation of principle which the career of political individuals so often presented. He was far from supposing, that a man who set out in life with the profession of certain sentiments, was bound to conclude life with them. He thought there might be many occasions in which a change of opinion, when that change was unattended by any personal advantages, when it appeared entirely disinterested, might be the result of sincere conviction. But what he most detested, what most filled him with disgust, was the settled, determined malignity of a renegado. He had read in a publication (The Quarterly Review), certainly entitled to much respect from its general literary excellences, though he differed from it in its principles, a passage alluding to the recent disturbances, which passage was as follows:—

"'When the man of free opinions commences professor of moral and political philosophy for the benefit of the public—the fables of old credulity are then verified—his very breath becomes venomous, and every page which he sends abroad carries with it poison to the unsuspicious reader. We have shown, on a former occasion, how men of this description are acting upon the public, and have explained in what manner a large part of the people have been prepared for the virus with which they inoculate them. The dangers arising from such a state of things are now fully apparent, and the designs of the incendiaries, which have for some years been proclaimed so plainly, that they ought, long ere this, to have been prevented, are now manifested by overt acts.'—

With the permission of the House, he would read an extract from a poem recently published, to which, he supposed, the above writer alluded (or at least to productions) of a similar kind), as constituting a part of the virus with which the public mind had been infected:—

> 'My brethren, these are truths and weighty ones:
> Ye are all equal; nature made ye so.
> Epuality is your birthright;—when I gaze
> On the proud palace, and behold one man,
> In the blood-purpled robes of royalty,
> Feasting at ease, and lording over millions;
> Then turn me to the hut of poverty,
> And see the wretched labourer, worn with toil,
> Divide his scanty morsel with his infants,
> I sicken, and indignant at the sight,
> Blush for the patience of humanity.'

"He could read many other passages from these works equally strong on both sides; but, if they were written by the same person, he should like to know from the honourable and learned gentleman

opposite, why no proceedings had been instituted against the author. The poem '*Wat Tyler*' appeared to him to be the most seditious book that was ever written; its author did not stop short of exhorting to general anarchy; he vilified kings, priests, and nobles, and was for universal suffrage, and perfect equality. The Spencean plan could not be compared with it; that miserable and ridiculous performance did not attempt to employ any arguments; but the author of Wat Tyler constantly appealed to the passions, and in a style which the author, at that time, he supposed, conceived to be eloquence. Why, then, had not those who thought it necessary to suspend the Habeas Corpus act taken notice of this poem? Why had not they discovered the author of that seditious publication, and visited him with the penalties of the law! The work was not published secretly, it was not handed about in the darkness of night, but openly and publicly sold in the face of day. It was at this time to be purchased at almost every bookseller's shop in London: it was now exposed for sale in a bookseller's shop in Pall Mall, who styled himself bookseller to one or two of the royal family. He borrowed the copy, from which he had just read the extract, from an honourable friend of his, who bought it in the usual way; and, therefore, he supposed there could be no difficulty in finding out the party that wrote it. He had heard, that when a man of the name of Winterbottom was some years ago confined in Newgate, the manuscript had been sent to him, with liberty to print it for his own advantage, if he thought proper; but that man, it appeared, did not like to risk the publication; and, therefore, it was now first issued into the world. It must remain with the government, and their legal advisers, to take what steps they might deem most advisable to repress this seditious work and punish its author. In bringing it under the notice of the House, he had merely spoken in defence of his constituents, who had been most grossly calumniated; and he thought that what he had said would go very far to exculpate them. But he wished to take this bull by the horns."

(d) Among the effusions of Mr. Southey's juvenile muse, we find this "Inscription for the Apartment in Chepstow Castle, where Henry Martin, the Regicide, was imprisoned thirty years:—

> "For thirty years secluded from mankind
> Here Martin linger'd. Often have these walls
> Echo'd his footsteps, as with even tread
> He paced around his prison. Not to him
> Did Nature's fair varieties exist;
> He never saw the sun's delightful beams;
> Save when through yon high bars he pour'd a sad
> And broken splendour. Dost thou ask his crime?
> *He hath rebell'd against the King, and sat*
> *In judgment on him;* for his ardent mind
> Shaped goodliest plans of happiness on earth,
> And peace and liberty. Wild dreams! but such
> As Plato loved; such as with holy zeal,
> Our Milton worshipp'd. Blessed hopes! awhile
> From man withheld, even to the latter days
> When Christ shall come, and all things be fulfill'd."

(e) See Captain Sir Edward Parry's Voyage, in 1819-20, for the discovery of a North-west passage.—"I believe it is almost impossible for words to give an idea of the beauty and variety which this magnificent phenomenon displayed. The luminous arch had broken into irregular masses, streaming with much rapidity in different directions, varying continually in shape and interest, and extending themselves from north, by the east, to north. At one time a part of the arch near the zenith was bent into convolutions resembling those of a snake in motion, and undulating rapidity, an appearance which we had not before

observed. The end towards the north was also bent like a shepherd's crook. The usual pale light of the aurora strongly resembled that produced by the combustion of phosphorus; a very slight tinge of red was noticed on this occasion, when the aurora was most vivid, but no other colours were visible."

(f) Johanna Southcote, the aged lunatic, who fancied herself, and was believed by many followers, to be with child of a new Messiah, died in 1815.

(g) "But when he stood in the Presence,
Then was the Fiend dismay'd, though with impudence clothed as a garment;
And the lying tongues were mute, and the lips, which had scatter'd
Accusation and slander, were still. No time for evasion
This, in the Presence he stood: no place for flight; for dissembling
No possibility there. From the souls on the edge of the darkness,
Two he produced, prime movers and agents of mischief, and bade them
Show themselves faithful now to the cause for which they had labour'd.
Wretched and guilty souls, where now their audacity? Where now
Are the insolent tongues so ready of old at rejoinder?
Where the lofty pretences of public virtue and freedom?
Where the gibe, and the jeer, and the threat, the envemon'd invective,
Calumny, falsehood, fraud, and the whole ammunition of malice?
Wretched and guilty souls, they stood in the face of their sovereign,
Conscious and self-condemn'd; confronted with him they had injured,
At the Judgment-seat* they stood."—SOUTHEY.

(h) Our new world has generally the credit of having first lighted the torch which was to illuminate, and soon set in a blaze, the finest part of Europe; yet I think the first flint was struck, and the first spark elicited, by the patriot John Wilkes, a few years before. In a time of profound peace, the restless spirit of men, deprived of other objects of public curiosity, seized with avidity on those questions which

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* In reference to this part of Mr. Southey's poem, the Eclectic Reviewer, we believe the late Rev. Robert Hall, said:—"Mr. Southey's 'Vision of Judgment' is unquestionably a profane poem. The assertion will stagger those only who do not consider what is the import of the word. Profaneness is the irreverent use of sacred means and things. A burlesque of things sacred, whether sacred or not, is profaneness. To apply the language of Scripture in a ludicrous connection is to profane it. The mummery of prayer on the stage, though in a serious play, is a gross profanation of sacred things. And all acts which come under the taking of God's name in vain are acts of profaneness. According to this definition of the word, the Laureate's 'Vision of Judgment' is a poem grossly and unpardonably profane. Mr. Southey's intention was, we are well persuaded, very far from being irreligious; and, indeed, the profaneness of the poem partly arises from the ludicrous effect produced by the bad taste and imbecility of the performance, for which his intentions are clearly not answerable. Whatever liberties a poet may claim to take, in representations partly allegorical, with the invisible realities of the world to come, the ignis fatuus of political zeal has, in this instance, carried Mr. Southey far beyond any assignable bounds of poetical license. It would have been enough to celebrate the apotheosis of the monarch; but, when he proceeds to travestie the final judgment, and to convert the awful tribunal of Heaven into a drawing-room levee, where he, the Poet Laureate, takes upon himself to play the part of a lord in waiting, presenting one Georgian worthy after another to kiss hands on promotion,—what should be grave is, indeed, turned to farce."

were then agitated with so much violence in England, touching the rights of the people and of the government, and the nature of power. The end of the political drama was in favour of what was called, and in some respects was, the liberty of the people. Encouraged by the success of this great comedian, the curtain was no sooner dropped on the scene of Europe, than new actors hastened to raise it again in America, and to give the world a new play, infinitely more interesting and more brilliant than the first."—M. SIMOND.

(i) King Alfonso, speaking of the Ptolemean system, said, that "had he been consulted at the creation of the world, he would have spared the Maker some absurdities."

(k) See Aubery's account of the apparition which disappeared 'with a curious perfume and a melodious twang;' or see the Antiquary, Vol. I., p. 225.

(l) A drowned body lies at the bottom till rotten; it then floats, as most people know.

(m) Southey's Vision of Judgment appears to us to be an ill-judged, and not a well-executed work. It certainly has added nothing to the reputation of its author in any respect. The nobleness of its motive does not atone for the indiscretion of putting it into so reprehensible a form. Milton's example will, perhaps, be pleaded in his vindication; but Milton alone has ever founded a fiction on the basis of revelation, without degrading his subject. He alone had succeeded in carrying his readers into the spiritual world. No other attempt of the kind has ever appeared that can be read without a constant feeling of something like burlesque, and a wish that the Tartarus and Elysium of the idolatrous Greeks should still be the hell and the heaven of poetry. A smile at the puerilities, and a laugh at the absurdity of the poet, might then be enjoyed by the reader, without an apprehension that he was guilty of profanity in giving it. Milton has been blamed by the most judicious critics, and his warmest admirers, for expressing the counsels of Eternal Wisdom, and the decrees of Almighty Power, by words assigned to the Deity. It offends against poetical propriety and poetical probability. It is impossible to deceive ourselves into a momentary and poetical belief that words proceeded from the Holy Spirit, except on the warrant of inspiration itself. It is here only that Milton fails, and here Milton sometimes shocks. The language and conduct ascribed by Milton to his inferior spirits, accord so well with our conceptions and belief respecting their nature and existence, that in many places we forget that they are, in any respect, the creatures of imagination. The blasphemies of Milton's devils offend not a pious ear, because they are devils who utter them. Nor are we displeased with the poet's presumption in feigning language for heavenly spirits, because it is a language that lifts the soul to heaven; and we more than believe, we know and feel, that, whatever may be the nature of the language of angels, the language of the poet truly interprets their sentiments. The words are human; but the truths they express, and the doctrines they teach are divine. Nothing of the same kind can be said of *any* other fable, serious or ludicrous, pious or profane, that has yet been written in any age or language.—*Blackwood*, 1822.

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